DRUM OF THE SOMERVILLES

BY

HAMILTON MORE NISBETT

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OF THE SOMERVILLES

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HAMILTON MORE NISBETT

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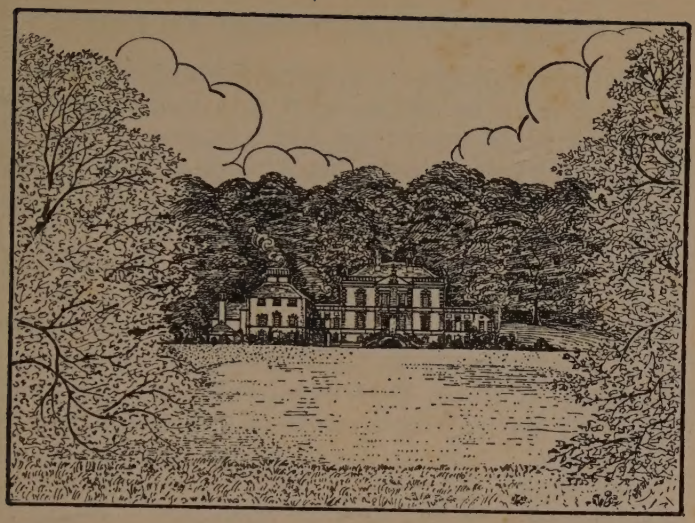

THE DRUM, GILMERTON

DRUM

OF THE SOMERVILLES

DRUM—the Gaelic equivalent of which, the erudite tell us, is *druim*, and the latin *dorsum*, signifying a back—is a name of frequent occurrence; the common formation of a hill or ridge, suggestive of a beast's back, making this inevitable. Sir Herbert Maxwell says that there are 198 Drums in Galloway alone. These, however, are merely Drums; the unique distinction given by the definite article at once renders *The* Drum different from and superior to all its neighbours. There is no doubt about the great antiquity of the place. That it is the *Καληδόνιος δρυμός* mentioned by Ptolemy,

no unprejudiced person, however learned, can deny. If this is not The Drum, what is ? Having settled these points of etymology and geography beyond all possibility of dispute, the history of the family, which has for the longest period been associated with the place, should next be considered.

The Memorie of the Somervills, written, as Sir Walter Scott says in his preface, in a "style of such prolixity as has seldom been equalled," contains, nevertheless, much interesting matter about the Somerville family, the times in which they lived, and much besides, including here and there scraps of information about The Drum not to be found elsewhere. Of their earliest history, he tells us, "The first that came into England being Sir Gualter de Somervill, a Norman Knight, who, for assisting King William the Conqueror in his conqueis of England, for that service had the lordship of Whichenour, in the Countie of Staffordshyre conferred upon him and his posteritie."

"As for ther preferment in Scotland, it was allmost so soon as they set ther foot into it; witness Sir John Somervill's being Knighted by King William, sirnamed the Lyon, in the nynth year of his reigne, anno 1174, at which tyme the sirname of Somervill settled themselves in Scotland, by Sir John Somervill haveing the baronie of Lintoune, in Roxburghshyre, conferred upon him by that King's gift, for killing a serpent, or a monstrous worme, as we have by traditioune from the vulgar."

There is a spirited account of the slaying of this "worme," too lengthy for quotation in full, but interesting as a local version of the almost universal St. George and the Dragon legend.

"The hydeous monster . . . in lenth 3 Scots yards, and somewhat bigger then an ordinary man's leg, with a head more proportionable to its lenth then greatness, in forme and cullour to our common muir edders . . . had its den in a hollow piece of ground upon the syde of a hill South East from Lintoune Church, which unto this day is knowne by the name of the Worme's Glen." It preyed upon the "bestial" of the natives and defied all their efforts to shoot it with arrows. John Somervill having undertaken to slay the monster, prepared for the fray with a lighted peat, "bedabbed with pitch, roset and brimstone, fixed with small wyre" on his lance, which he had made of twice the ordinary length, "with a little slender wheell of irone half a foot down from the poynt," for greater facility in running it down the monster's throat. He trained his horse, to accustom it to this unusual weapon, and on the appointed day, charging full tilt, his plan worked out according to schedule, and the worme was slain. The latter part of the twelfth century seems late in the day for a prehistoric monster to have been lurking in a frequented part of Roxburghshire. Perhaps the strength or quality of the local "usquebaugh" may have had something to do with it. For this public-spirited action, John Somerville was made King's Falconer and also (very appropriately) Sheriff of Roxburghshire.

Though the Somerville family played their part bravely in the stormy sea of Scots mediæval history—they appear on the side of Wallace and Bruce, of James III against his rebellious subjects, and of Queen Mary after her escape from Loch-

leven—it is only in their connection with Midlothian that we are interested. How they came to this district requires explanation.

In 1371 Sir John Herring was the proprietor of Gilmerton, and also of Edmonstoun in Clydesdale. The latter marched with the Somervill property there. Sir John had two daughters, Margaret and Giles, his co-heiresses. Margaret was very devout, and spent much of her time in the Abbey Church of Newbattle. The attraction turned out to be a young monk, with whom she had fallen in love, and she used to keep assignations with him at a farm-house, Grange, near Gilmerton. The tenant of the farm, a young widow, had also a monk lover. The association of his daughter with this woman, known to be of loose character, having reached the ears of Sir John, "a forward and furious man," he upbraided her, forbade her ever to go to the place again, and threatened her with death if she disobeyed. The same night, not finding his daughter in her room, and hearing that she had gone out a back way, and taken the road to Grange, he followed, and finding his worst fears realised he set fire to the thatch and burnt the farm-house and all that were in it. In those spacious days it might be considered that a man had a right to burn his own daughter, and perhaps even the farmeress, as his tenant, but the monks, holy men, were another matter altogether, and Sir John had to fly the country.*

Sir Walter Somerville, his neighbour in Lanarkshire, kept in touch with Sir John in his exile, and

* The story is told in the ballad *The Grey Brother* by Sir Walter Scott, who, when it was written, lived near by at Lasswade.

used his good offices with the King on his behalf. Eventually, through the King's influence, he was relieved from his outlawry and allowed to return. Sir Walter seems also to have appealed to the Abbot of Newbattle, with the result that Sir John, after making over half his estate to the Abbey, paying a heavy fine and "dreeing" his penance, "bare-headed and in sackcloath, at the door of St. Katherin's Chappell, every Sabbath and holyday for ane year," was reinstated. Sir Walter having married the remaining daughter "Geilles," obtained the other half of the estate. Thus came the Somervill family to Midlothian.

Drum is first mentioned about 1406, when "THOMAS SOMERVILL had from his father the lands of Gilmerton, Drum and Gutters." The name Gutters was later changed to the more euphonious Goodtrees, and is now called Moredun. This Thomas was the second son of Sir Walter, who married Giles Herring.

"His eldest sone John succeeded to the barronies of Lintoune and Carnwath by his father, and to that of Cambusnethan by his father-in-law. To his second sone Thomas he leaves the lands of Gillmertoune who having marryed Katherine Straton the laird of Straton's second daughter . . . with her he had noe children soe that the lands of Gillmertoune . . . fell into his nephew Thomas, Lord Somervill."

"In anno 1412, Sir Thomas Somervill of Gillmertoune, Drum and Gutters dying, he leaves the lands to his nephew Sir Thomas reserving the liferent of all these lands to his lady, Katherine Straton."

THOMAS (called in the *Memorie*, LORD) SOMERVILL, was nephew to the last. In 1427 "Being returned from the South, he came to Mid Louthian, and orders his affaires in Gillmertoune, from which lands he reaped as much benefite, both in reall and casuall rent, as he did from any other barronies within the natione, having both coalles and lyme-stone in abundance, with a constant and settled rent, being all in acker-dale land (except the Drum and Gutters) duely payed, because of the neer neighbourhead of the towne of Edinburgh."

He was succeeded by his son WILLIAM, who, in Sir James Balfour Paul's Peerage, is called THE 1ST LORD SOMERVILLE. He was served heir to the lands of Gilmerton in 1445. He married Janet, daughter of Sir John Mowat of Stennis (Stenhouse).

His son, JOHN 2ND LORD, was with James II at the siege of Roxburgh Castle, when the King was killed by the bursting of a cannon. Lord Somerville married Helen, daughter of Adam Hepburn, Lord Hailes. His son, William, died during his lifetime, and his grandson

JOHN succeeded as 3RD LORD. He appears to have been somewhat "daft," and the estate was managed by his uncle, Sir John Somerville of Quothquan, who took unfair advantage of his position. The 3rd Lord married Agnes Colquhoun of Luss, but had no children, and was succeeded by his brother

HUGH, 4TH LORD. He was born in 1486, and married Janet Maitland of Lethington. He was made a prisoner at Solway Moss. He was extravagant in dress and hospitality. On one occasion he

attended the Court of King James V at Holyrood very smartly attired, but with only one page. The King, who had seen his approach from a window, and admired his get-up, though wondering at his scanty following, made some jesting remark about the absence of his retainers. Lord Somerville's reply was, "Please your Majesty, here they are, poynting to every lace on his oune and his page's cloathes." The King laughed. These clothes were kept at Drum for three generations, but were lost when the house was burnt.

In 1513 Edmonstone village was devastated by the plague. The dead were buried in a pit dug on the top of Todhills, at the place where six sycamores now grow. A straight path made between the village and the place of burial was known as "mortal Baulk." The line of the hedge separating Edmonstone Mains and Woolmet farms would be about the shortest way between the two places.

James, 5th Lord, Hugh's son, was born in 1518. He fought for Queen Mary at Langside. He married (1) Jean, natural daughter of James, 1st Earl of Arran, and (2) Agnes Hamilton, of Finnart.

Hugh, 6th Lord, "succeeded to his father James in the year 1570 . . . served heir to him in anno 1571." He married Eleanor, daughter of Alexander, Lord Seton. In 1578 he recovered the lands of Drum, Gilmerton and Gutters, after long litigation with the Cambusnethan family. It is said that the judgment in his favour was influenced by the Regent Morton. Lord Somerville called on him, and before leaving, he took out his well-filled purse, ostensibly to tip the servants as was customary,

but he 'accidentally' left it on the table, and was obligingly deaf when the Regent called after him, "My Lord, you have forgot your purse."

"Thus ended that expensive plea between the houses of Cowthally and Cambusnethan efter seven or eight year debeatt, and these lands of Louthian returned again to the Lord Somervills, when they had been four score years compleat in the possessione of the familie of Cambusnethan, viz. from the year 1498 to the year 1578."

The story of the alienation of the property is long and complex, and its legal technicalities are not made easier by the discursiveness of the author of the *Memorie*; but it had to do with the mental deficiency of John, 3rd Lord, who had been put under the care of Sir John Somerville of Quothquan, and he seems to have abused the powers he had as uncle and "tutor" (*i.e.* guardian).

Lord Hugh next takes in hand the management of his estate and makes all "the tennents give up their old tackes, and take new tackes of himself." Having settled his leases he now comes to the building of the house. Hitherto there has been no mention of a house at Drum, but now—"The parliament being brocken up, the Lord Somervill comes to the Drum, accompanyed with his father or brother-in-law (for I am not certane which of the two he was to him), Alexander Lord Seatoune, and John Millne, the King's master meassone. Having pitched upon the place for situatione, they agree with him for building a house, the lenth, breadth, and hight, being condescended upon. The wholl contryveance, with the price, was, by the

Lord Somervill and Master Millne, remitted to the Lord Seatoune, he being one of the greatest builders in that age; and at that very tyme had the King's master of worke at Seatone, building that large quarter of his palace towards the north-east. The place of Drum was begune in June 1584, and finished in October 1585, in the same forme it is in at present, but one story laigher; it being some years thereafter by ane casuall fyre brunt doune. Hugh Somerville, 8th Lord, *d.j.*, youngest sone, but then second sone by the death of his brethren, to this Lord Hugh, rebuilt the same, and raised it one storie higher. The roumes are few, but fair and large; the entrie and stair-caice extremely ill placed, neither is the outward forme modish, being built all in lenth in forme of a church. It was finished the second tyme, being again brunt by accident in anno 1629; and soe remains untill this day in the possessione of the first builder's posteritie."

There are traces of this (1584–5) house in the kitchen wing of the present mansion. The walls, 4 feet, and in places nearly 5 feet thick, the vaulting of the ground floor, and the mouldings of the imposts from which it springs, suggest an earlier date than that of the present house. It is hardly possible that this vaulted ground storey could be destroyed in either of the fires mentioned, so this part of the kitchen wing may be assumed to be part of the earliest house of Drum, of which there is mention. There is also a door, now opening into a passage, but evidently once an outside door; made in the old manner, of planks running vertically outside and horizontally inside, hung on strap

hinges and furnished with a knocker, on the back-plate of which are pierced "J. S." and "1698." The initials and date no doubt refer to James, the 11th Lord, *d.j.*, 1674–1709.

Hugh, Lord Somerville, in addition to building Drum House, repaired and altered Cowthally Castle near Carnwath, then the chief seat of the family. The expense of these building operations landed him in difficulties, and he had to "wadset" the lands of Gutters. Gilbert, who was "Goldsmith to the Queen," advanced him £1000 Scots over these.

He was succeeded by his third son, GILBERT, 7TH LORD. Hugh's eldest son, Robert, while yet a boy, had the misfortune to kill his next brother, William, and died himself before his father.

The scene of this tragedy is described as a meadow where willow trees grow, immediately to the south of the house. The family had travelled from Cowthally that day, starting early in the morning, as the weather was hot. Lord Somerville was resting in the house, and the boys, with some servants, were lying on the grass, when the Master of Somerville began polishing a pistol that had become rusty, with the result that it went off and killed his brother. He had to ride for his life, pursued by his enraged father, until at Smeaton Ford, on the Esk, Lord Somerville was persuaded to give up the chase, and eventually he forgave his son. Some remains suggestive of the base of a monument are still to be seen in a situation that answers the description. They are overshadowed by some thorn trees which may have been planted at some time as a hedge

surrounding or forming a background to the monument.

"Gilbert, Lord Somervill, succeeded to his father, Lord Hugh, as to all his titles and honoures in anno 1597. James, his only son, having dyed in his nonage, Lord Gilbert himself dyed in 1618 without male issue."

Hugh, 8th Lord, brother to the last, was the tenth son of the 6th Baron, the others having died. He preferred to describe himself as a simple Esquire, Somerville of Drum, thinking "his fortune not suitable to his dignity." He was page of the bedchamber to James VI when a boy. He is described as having "an unruly humour, which created him many troubles." He was tried for killing a collier, but acquitted (see Pitcairn's *Criminal Trials*). He married Margaret, second daughter of Gavin Hamilton, of Raploch. She also appears to have been 'difficult,' as she had twice to find caution to keep the peace.

Hugh sold Gutters about 1602 to John Fenton of Fentonbarns.

"Hugh Somervill of Drum was youngest sone of Hugh Lord Somerville, and Dame Helenour Seatoune, the death of nyne elder brethren brought him to the estate of Drum, Gilmertoune and Gutters." He lived forty-two years at Drum, and was on good terms with all his neighbours, except Sir David Crichtoune of Lugton, with whom he had "many debeattes concerning the marches in the toune of Gilmertoune, the whole there being rune rig." ("That is, by alternate ridges, a very inconvenient state of property.") "He mynded nothing but

sport, hunting and halking . . . in company of the Lord Dalhoussie and James Lord Rosse his oune brother-in-law." Both these were neighbours; Lord Dalhousie lived at the Castle of that name and Lord Ross at Melville Castle.

His wife, Margaret Hamilton of Raploch, was a "careful" Lady, and the savings she effected helped to pay for the rebuilding of the house, which was twice burnt.

Milady's housekeeping was on a somewhat frugal scale. On one occasion some guests arrived from Edinburgh with the evident intention of staying to dinner and there was not enough in the house for their entertainment. Milady on visiting her "lardner," was at first relieved and then enraged by the sight of "one of the ffattest ffour-year-old weathers hinging" there, she having given no orders for the execution of one of these valuable animals; "for ordinary in the spring she receaved eight, nyne, yea, sometymes ten pund Scots ffor the head of each of them." The explanation was that the laird finding one of his "halkes" ailing, and the heart of a freshly killed sheep being the orthodox diet for a hawk that was off its feed, had sent his shepherd to the hill for the best sheep he had got, nothing being too good for one of his favourite birds. As one of the self-invited guests was Milady's own brother, we may hope that both her lord and the shepherd escaped the dressing down they might otherwise have got.

'Laird' Hugh died in 1640, aged 72, and was buried at Liberton, the first of his family to be interred there.

James, 9th Lord, *d.j.*, was son of the last. Born in 1595–6, he served in his Uncle Sir John Seton's Company in Louis XIII's Guard; also in the Army of the Swiss Republic. In 1639 he joined the Covenanting Army in Sir John Wauchope of Niddry's Company. He was made Governor of Durham, in the English invasion. In 1644, as Colonel of the College of Justice Regiment, he was left in command of Morpeth, which he held against Montrose. He married Lilias, daughter of Sir James Bannatyne, Lord Newhall. They first met at Liberton Church, where between sermons they repaired to one of the inns for refreshment. These entertainments must have been economical as well as agreeable, being stood by old Sir David Crichtoun, whom we have seen in his more militant youth engaged in fierce "debeattes" with James Somerville's father over the inconvenient "rune rig marches" between the Lugton and Gilmerton properties. With his wife's "tocher" he bought Pilrig's Mailing, near Gilmerton. ("Pillriges Mailleing anciently belonging to the Viccares of Libbertoune . . . upon the South Syde of Gilmertoune, att the toune foote"), and took up residence there. Later he lived at Drum until 1658, when he moved to Edinburgh, where he spent the remainder of his life. He died in 1677, and was buried at Holyrood.

James, 10th Lord, *d.j.*, his son, was baptized in 1632, and lived at Drum from 1663 until his death in 1693. He married (1) Martha, daughter of John Bannatyne of Corehouse; (2) Margaret, daughter of Gavin Jamieson, in the Walkmiln of Calder. He wrote the *Memorie of the Somervilles*;

this was not published until 1814, when Sir Walter Scott edited it and wrote the introduction and notes (see Lockhart's *Life of Scott*). His son James was killed by Thomas Learmonth, whom he met fighting with Hew Paterson, younger of Bannockburn, on the road from Edinburgh; in trying to separate them Somerville was fatally wounded. He died two days later, having forgiven his slayer and besought him to fly. He married, clandestinely, Elizabeth, daughter of George Graham, Merchant, Edinburgh, and had a son James, who became the 11th Lord, *d.j.* Though "merchant" probably means shopkeeper, this was considered no disability at that time, and Elizabeth Graham was of Montrose blood.

The author of the *Memorie* speaks highly of the tact and business ability of his wife, though he does not tell us which of them. He found his affairs in great confusion on succeeding. "Notwithstanding of the bad conditione I found it in, I mynded more my halkes and dogs then business, which was weill supplied by my wife's indefatigable pains as to my concernes." With her servants she "conversed pleasantly and familiarly, which made them doe more then all the rigiditie that a sullen or dogged mistresse can extort from them." He died, as has been said, in 1693, and was buried in London. He was succeeded by his grandson,

James, 11th Lord, *d.j.*, who was baptized in 1674, and married Janet, daughter of Patrick Murray of Mount Lothian. He was succeeded by his son,

James, 12th Lord Somerville, known as the

Restorer, as by his marriages with two heiresses he repaired the fortunes of the family, revived the title and built the present house. He was born in 1698, and married (1st) Anne, only daughter of Henry Bayntun of Spye Park, Wilts, whose mother was Lady Anne Wilmot, eldest daughter of John, the famous Earl of Rochester. Lady Somerville was the widow of Edward Rolt of Sacombe Park, Hertford. "He resided with his wife on her estate until 1726, when he returned to Scotland. On 8th October 1728 he received the freedom of the City of Glasgow. He pulled down the old house of Drum and erected the present mansion after the design of William Adam of Marybury.* He laid out the grounds and dispensed a generous hospitality. He was the friend of Allan Ramsay and of William Somerville, the poet of *The Chace* (see *The Scots Peerage*, ed. Sir James Balfour Paul). Lady Somerville died at Drum on 24th October 1734, and was buried in Liberton Church. Lord Somerville married (2nd) Frances, fifth daughter and co-heir of John Rotherham of Much Waltham, Essex, and widow of Peter Curgenven, an East India Merchant. They were married at St. Gregory's, London, on 27th April 1736. This Lady Somerville died at Drum on 13th May 1755.

The present house was probably built, or at any

* William Adam, 1689-1748, was the father of John, Robert, James and William Adam. The last three were Architects and are known as the brothers Adam and the originators of the Adam style in architecture and the applied arts. Robert was the most famous of them. William was the founder of the Blairadam family. Marybury is part of the estate.

rate begun, somewhere between 1726, when the pair returned to Scotland, and 1734, when the first Lady Somerville died. The arms in the pediment of the principal façade show Somerville quartered with Bayntun. (Somerville. az: 6 cross crosslets fitché arg: 3, 1 & 2, accompanied by 3 mullets or. Bayntun of Spye Park, Wilts, bears sa: a bend lozengy arg.) Strictly speaking, these coats should have been impaled, if carved during Lady Somerville's lifetime. It is possible that the 13th Lord might have had them cut after his father's death, in which case they would be correct as they are.

In plaster over the hall chimney-piece appear Lord Somerville's arms impaled with those of his second wife (Rotherham, gu: 3 roebucks passant or: Papworth's *Dictionary of Coats of Arms*), showing that the interior cannot have been completed until after 1736, the date of Lord Somerville's second marriage.

If the 12th Lord laid out the grounds, as stated above, he was probably responsible for the Outlook Tower, which stood at the upper end of the avenue running north from the house. "The avenue opposite to the north front of the house is terminated by an ancient-like structure, on the summit of a hill, which is seen at a great distance, and adds great solemnity and grandeur to the whole" (The Rev. Thos. Whyte). Elsewhere Mr Whyte describes this tower as battlemented; this might suggest the idea of antiquity to him. It is not known if William Adam designed this tower; if he did, he was probably responsible for the lay-out of the grounds, as he was for that around the contemporary mansion of

Arniston. The view tower was pulled down in 1830 or 1831. From the description "circular and battlemented," it has the hall-mark of the sham Gothic occasionally perpetrated in the eighteenth century, and its destruction is not altogether to be regretted. *The Memorie* tells us that "the chimney brace which bears the Somerville's arms, with the inscriptioune of Hugh, Lord Somerville's name incircleing," was brought to Drum in 1698 and "plaiced in the stair caice built in the same year." An original note adds, "in 1741 placed on Lord Somerville's tower." This stone is now built into the garden wall.

"The situation of the house is a little to the east from that of the old. The front looks to the south and presents a most agreeable landscape. It is all ashlar work and makes a fine appearance. There is no such house in the parish. Here the armorial bearing of the late Lord Somerville, who built the house, is set out in a splendid manner in the upper part, impaled with those of his first lady. Immediately above this are three vases of an exquisite choice. Along the whole front is an handsome balustrade. . . . Danderhall, and what is done there, present a noble view to the drawing-room and the appartments on that hand." While one can imagine the doings at Danderhall (a small village) to have been of absorbing interest, the growth of the trees which shut out that "noble view" may afford some compensation. "The main stair, of late erected, is noble, and consequently not unworthy of the edifice." (An account by the Rev. T. Whyte of the Parish of Liberton in *Transactions*

of Soc. of Antiquaries of Scotland, Vol. I, 1792.) The remark, "of late erected," suggests that the present outside staircase was not part of the original design. This is confirmed by the fact that the back piers of the arch carrying the top landing are built in front of two windows, partially blocking them and darkening the passage within. A tradition that the staircase had to be built thrice before Lord Somerville was satisfied, also gain support from the structure. It is certain that no architect would place his stair so, unless compelled to. The awkward way in which the handrails finish against the sills of windows, instead of against solid walls also suggests some over-riding of the architects' convention. Though Mr. Whyte's description, quoted above, may not be very critical, he at any rate gets considerably nearer the mark than the 'superior' writer of the recent article on Drum in *Country Life*, who persists in regarding this fine house merely "as a source of innocent merriment."

On this front, the leadwork of the rainwater pipes is notable, the bands holding the pipes to the wall being stamped with Lord Somerville's coronet, and this device also appears on the rainwater head. Below this, there was a piece of ornament, somewhat resembling a Prince of Wales' feather, probably some adaptation of the acanthus leaf. This was much admired by experts, and many a grey beard was waggled over it, pronouncing it to be "the finest bit of leadwork in Scotland." Somewhere about 1920 it fell down, and disclosed the fact that it was made of lath and plaster. This shows how carefully every detail was considered. We do

not put up models of our rainwater heads nowadays, and, if we did, we would be far too self-conscious to forget about them.

During the Restorer's reign the political atmosphere was disturbed by the '45, and Drum came in for a small share in the stirring events of the time. Shortly after the battle of Prestonpans, as my Lord and my Lady (staunch Hanoverians) sat at supper in the dining-room, the alarm was raised that the Highlanders were marching up the avenue. The silver was hastily thrown out of the windows on to the bank below, where as the grass grew long, it escaped observation. My Lady sent her step-daughter out to conceal her jewels in the roots of one of the large trees, and then she and her lord retired to the attics, where they took up a strategic position in one of the cupboards which fill the space near the foot of the rafters, and awaited events. The Highlanders, a party of stragglers, obtained food and other spoil from the household, but being met in the west avenue by the villagers of Gilmerton, to whom an S.O.S. message had been sent, they were compelled to disgorge all that they carried *outside*. This local victory for King George was not bloodless, as in addition to minor casualties, three villagers and five Highlanders were killed. Prince Charlie was naturally apologetic for his followers' behaviour, and supplied an Officer's Guard to Drum for the remainder of his stay at Holyrood.

If a modern Rip Van Winkle could reverse the process and step back into the second or third decade of the eighteenth century, one of the first things

that would strike him (always next to the delight of being able to walk, or even ride, on the public roads without courting a violent death, and the blessed relief of finding his studies, or slumbers, undisturbed by the querulous ring of the telephone bell) would be the much larger number of people living in the *country* as distinct from towns and suburbs. On Drum, for instance, the following villages are mentioned—Drumtown, Drumholm, Drummuir, Awalls, Normanknows, and Todhills. Where can all these hamlets, however small, have been stowed away on so inconsiderable a property? Except for Todhills, now reduced to a farm steading and two cottages, there is no sign of any one of these, nor does any name suggest their site. Gutters had its own villages; three are mentioned. The population of Gilmerton was about 800.

It is interesting to try and visualise the appearance of the place at this date. The house itself is wonderfully little changed. The beech avenue still stands, and this was crossed near its lower end by another avenue running "parallel to the principal front of the house." The point where these avenues intersected is marked by the trees (they only remain on one side here) forming a semicircle. In the middle of this circle, when complete, stood "three Gothic arches, the one large, and the two other of lesser size." What were these? A fragment of some earlier building of which there is no record, or a sham antique, made perhaps of stones from the earlier house? At the other end of this avenue, to the east, stood a dove-cot. The appearance of this is more easily imagined, as plenty of other examples

exist, no old Scottish place being complete without one. Doo'cot Park, the name of the field on the north side of the curling pond, shows approximately its distance from the house. The principal entrance was probably the north gate; the piers and balustrade of this still exist, with the crooks on which wrought iron gates no doubt hung. Below the balustrade traces of two square windows can be made out in the masonry, showing the former existence of lodges. The height of these above the ground suggest that the lodges must have had two stories. The fragment does not appear to be much older than the present house, judging by the detail of what is left. Tradition assigns it to John Milne, the King's Master Mason. At the lower or south end of this avenue stood the Mercat Cross of Edinburgh, removed here in 1756. In place of the restored unicorn carrying a vane, it was surmounted by a cross crosslet, which no doubt had some connection with the cross crosslets fitché of the Somerville arms. The "mount" on which it stood can still be traced; the wall of the farm steading is partly built on it. Here it was well placed, as those who did not want to look at it were not obliged to do so. Later it was moved to the middle of the vista in front of the house, where a modern monument representing it now stands. The original cross was restored to its proper place in Edinburgh in 1866. With these and the outlook tower, Drum was well supplied with objects of interest for the "entertainment" of Lord Somerville's guests.

"The pleasure grounds are extensive, the plantations flourishing. There are a great many stately

oaks and sycamores. The beeches, however, are most numerous, and make the best appearance. A variety of fine walks, a variety of vistas, and avenues, present themselves on all hands. One is always entertained with some new object."

The oaks of that day have nearly all disappeared. Sycamores still abound, but the tree that does best at Drum, as Mr. Whyte truly says, is the beech. Although these are now long past their prime, they are still one of the features of the place, and a joy to all tree lovers. They are also a never-failing source of interest to a well-known arboriculturist, who never fails in his annual visit to measure and note their girths, and he reports that they are still increasing. There appears to be no record concerning the four remarkably fine cedars which still adorn the shrubbery, when or by whom they were planted, and in what environment.

Mr. Whyte mentions "a large piece of water, stored with different kinds of fish." Can this be the curling pond, or on the site of it? If so, the fishes have left no descendants. The heron, however, a lineal descendant of those which made the noblest quarry for the Somerville "halkes," still visits this pond. Perhaps he cherishes a tradition of how an ancestor of his impaled one of these hawks, as the Somerville ancestor impaled the worm. In these degenerate days he must be restricted, like the Frenchman of one's early imaginings, to a diet of frogs.

Below ground, Drum "was favoured with a coalliery, and no doubt much coal as well as limestone may still be found, since the water which so

much obstructed the work is now drained by means of those levels which have been made of late on the north-east side." History repeats itself, and Drum is still "favoured" with a colliery, and it is still troubled with water, which has stopped more than one pit already, and the fate of the latest venture, in spite of up-to-date draining plant and great expenditure, is still in the balance.

The inside of the house is happily as little altered as the outside, and but for the changes rendered necessary by modern prejudices in favour of baths and other sanitary fittings, it is very much as the Restorer knew it. In fact, it only requires to be peopled with ladies who apply powder to their hair instead of, less becomingly, to their faces, and over whose lower limbs, now so much in evidence, brocaded and crinolined skirts cast a shadow of mystery—with gentlemen, too, who not only act, but look the part, in knee-breeches and buckled shoes, instead of unsightly plus-fours, the lowest sartorial depth to which even fallen man has yet descended.

Some things of interest must necessarily disappear in the inevitable changes which time brings. "At the head of the stair leading to the dining-room is exhibited in stucco a coat of arms, consisting of three leopard's heads, two and one; and for supporters, two hounds; and around all, the following inscription: 'Sig: Gulielmi Somervil, Dom: de Kernewid, 1141.' This was the armorial bearing of William de Kernewid, that is, de Carnwath, predecessor of Lord Somerville. It was taken from the original in the College of Glasgow. Leopards were

carried by William Duke of Normandy, Conqueror of England. And this verifies what is commonly reported, that the Somervilles accompanied that Prince in his English expedition and came to Scotland in the reign of St. David and became proprietors of Carnwath in Clydesdale and Linton in Teviotdale. Leopards' heads, two and one, constituted the armorial bearing of the Somervilles before the holy wars; but . . . after they returned, they assumed, as they justly might, the cross crosslets, and they still retain them." It is not necessary to take Mr. Whyte quite seriously here, either in his history or his heraldry, but this must have been an interesting panel, whatever its history; and although there is a super-abundance of fine plaster work in the house, the loss of a piece of such entirely different character is to be regretted. Its position cannot be traced. The present stair leading to the dining-room is modern; the former connection with the basement was by the semicircular stair farther west, the lower part of which is now removed.

The twelfth Lord Somerville was, with good reason, proud of his house, and in the delight of showing it to visitors, he occasionally forgot the sacred duties of hospitality. A painful story of his want of consideration to a guest is told. Lord Stair was dining with him, and after dinner the "Restorer" got on his hobby and forgot all else, including the passing of the bottle. Having exhausted the beauties of the dining-room he now began to enlarge upon those of the hall, to which he eagerly led the way. Missing his audience, however, he returned to the dining-room and

surprised his guest in the act of draining the decanter without the intervention of a wineglass. To what an extremity of thirst must not his lordship, reputed to be the best-bred man in Europe, have been reduced, even although as an old campaigner it may have been no new experience! The incident serves as a warning to hosts in general not to neglect (or bore) their guests.

James, 13th Lord, son of the "Restorer" by his first wife, was born at Drum and attended school, first at Dalkeith, then Edinburgh. Later he was under the care of the Rev. Edward Somerville, Rector of Aston Somerville in Worcestershire, and brother of the poet of *The Chace*, and finally he was at Westminster. He served in the army and acted as A.D.C. to Sir John Cope and General Hawley in the '45. He was distinguished by his clemency during the suppression of the rising, a quality which was not too much in evidence at that time. He owned Spylaw, near Colinton. His income from Drum was £2500 and from Aston Somerville £1000. He was elected a representative peer in 1793, and died in 1796, unmarried. He was buried at Old Weston Church, Bath.

His nephew, John Southey, succeeded as 14th Lord. He was the son of Hugh, second son of the "Restorer," and was educated at Harrow. He was a pioneer in the movement for improving agriculture. He lived at the Pavilion, on the Tweed, and was intimate with his neighbour, Sir Walter Scott. To this friendship may very possibly be traced the publication of the *Memorie*, by Sir Walter in 1814. Lord Somerville was Colonel of the West Somerset

Yeomanry during the threatened French invasion. His portrait in uniform was painted by Samuel Woodforde, R.A., and engraved by James Ward, R.A. He sold Drum in lots, between 1800 and 1809. It is said that he had never visited Drum when he sold it, and that he regretted his action when he saw the place. That is the tradition, but it would show not merely want of imagination, but a callousness that one can hardly credit on the part of Lord Somerville, who must often have passed the gates on his way between Edinburgh and the Pavilion, never to have troubled to visit the home of his ancestors for so many generations. He died in 1819, unmarried, and was buried at Aston Somerville.

Mark, 15th Lord, half-brother to the last, was born in 1784. He served in the Artillery. He died in 1842, unmarried.

Kenelm, 16th Lord, brother to the last, was in the Navy and became an admiral. He was born in 1787. He married Frances Louisa Hayman and had a son Hugh. He died in 1864.

Hugh, 17th Lord, son of the last, was born in 1839, and killed hunting on 17th November 1868.

Aubrey, 18th Lord, cousin to the last, was the son of the Rev. William Somerville (who had been in the Navy before he was ordained), the son of Hugh, second son of the Restorer. He was born in 1838 and died in 1870, unmarried. Since his death the title has been in abeyance.

The sale of the place so long held by this family was regrettable, as also was the neglect by so many of the later holders of the title of the important

duty of marrying and begetting heirs; yet they always retained their sense of public duty. They all served their country either in the army or in the Navy. In other respects they seem to have led healthy lives, and to have been true to the sporting traditions of their house, as the death of the last lord but one in the hunting field shows.

When the 14th Lord dispersed the property, the house and policy were bought by JAMES HAY, of Bhaglepore, an East India Merchant, in 1800. The Deer Park had been previously sold to Robert Baird of Newbyth, from whom it was bought in 1836 by Mr. Wauchope of Edmonston. The reign of the Nabob did not last long, as Drum was again sold in 1806 to ROBERT CATHCART, W.S. He became a partner in Messrs. Constable's business, Sir Walter Scott's publishers. "The new partners to which he (Sir Walter) refers were Mr. Robert Cathcart, Writer to the Signet, a man of high worth and integrity, who continued to be connected with Constable's business until his death in 1812. . . ." (Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, Vol. II, chap. 10.) Mr. Cathcart is said to have made the present garden, and to have produced there the first pine-apples grown in Scotland. He bought Todhills from Lord Somerville, and sold Drum farm to Mr. Baird. After his death his trustees sold half of Todhills to John Tod, W.S., in 1817. The house and estate were sold in 1820 to GILBERT INNES, of Stow. His daughter JANE succeeded him, and on her death, her kinsman, MR. MITCHELL, of Stow, inherited the property. He sold it in 1862 to JOHN MORE NISBETT, of Cairnhill who, in 1865, bought Todhills,

and later (about 1900) Drumbank and the Deer Park.

Thus for the third time in its history has Drum come into the possession of a Lanarkshire family; for both the Herrings and the Somervilles had their principal properties in that county. The coming of the present family, however, was not accompanied by any of the exciting events which heralded the beginning of the Somerville reign, neither frail ladies nor frisky ecclesiastics playing any part in the transaction; and if their subsequent tenure of the property has been uneventful, some good and comparatively little harm has been done by them to the house and grounds. It is true that the stuccoed brick wing, added at the north-west corner, is neither a thing of beauty nor is it likely to be a joy for ever; but although they may have done a few things that they ought not to have done, they have also left undone a good many things that they might have done, and for this one cannot be too thankful. Few old houses have got through the worst period of European taste so little altered or spoilt. Until sometime in the '70's a picturesque feature survived on the north side of the house. There was then neither road nor shrubbery on that side, only grass, and in place of the present flight of steps, the park rose in a 'mount' to the door. This was of glass, divided like the windows into many panes, so that for anyone sitting in the hall there was a pleasing view of rising park with trees forming a vista in the middle distance to be seen. Whether this charmingly primitive arrangement made the house more damp than it is now is at least

questionable; but there is little doubt that something of the nature of a concealed dry area might have been devised, which would have made the grassy slope as innocuous as a staircase. Once removed, however, this is not a thing that can ever be replaced.

Meanwhile, like another and more formidable "Lintoune worme," the town still advances inexorably, devouring not merely "bestial," but fields and woods, and farms and cottages and all that go to make the country. Already the skirmishers of the invading army, to vary the simile, in the shape of steel and stucco-built bungalows, roofed with pink tiles of Welsh or other "foreign" manufacture, have reached Gilmerton, and the genteel urban inhabitants of these signify their "urbanity" by objecting to whippet racing and other barbaric sports of the natives.

In the blissful state to which we are so rapidly drifting, lairds will soon have come to be regarded as fabulous monsters, and country houses only to exist in the form of institutions for making people sober or virtuous, or something that they do not want to be. Gilmerton House has fallen, in a literal sense, a victim to neglect and coal-mining; and Moredun, the "Gutters" of the *Memorie*, and so long the abode of hospitality and philanthropy, is now in process of being pulled down.

With the disappearance of these abodes of quiet and dignified privacy, there also disappears a class who, whatever may have been their shortcomings, were brought up to consider others, to maintain a high standard of manners and conduct and a sense

of public duty. Were not these virtues in some degree the outcome of their environment? In the peaceful atmosphere of a neighbouring place, Drummond of Hawthornden, wrote :—

> "What sweet delight a quiet life affords,
> And what it is to be of bondage free,
> Far from the madding worldling's hoarse discords,
> Sweet flowery place I first did learn of thee."

APPENDIX

There are, naturally enough, not many references to Drum in general literature, but the facetious ballad, "Ffollowis the Justing and Debait up at the Drum betuix Wa Adamsone and Johine Sym," by Alexander Scott, who wrote between 1545 and 1568, makes Drum the scene of a Tournament for the love of a lady—

"The grit Debait and Turnament
Off trewth no toung can tell,
Wes for a lusty lady gent,
Betuix twa freikis fell;
Ffor Mars, the god armipotent,
Wes not sa ferss him sell
Nor Hercules, that aikkis vprent,
And dang the devill of hell
Wt hornis,
Up at the Drum that day."

Why these champions, who were apparently skinners in Edinburgh,

"Bettir we bath wer byand hyddis
And weddir skynis at hame,
Nor heir;"

should have chosen Drum for their encounter is not clear: that they should have adjourned to Dalkeith for refreshment is more understandable, as the entertainment provided—

"Thair wes baith wyne and venisoun,
And barrellis ran on broche."—

could not have been got at a local ale house.

In spite of all the stimulants taken, the fighting fizzled out, Adamson having shown the white feather. The plucky Sym next challenged him to ride down the steep bank of the Esk, but his own horse falling halfway, Adamson did not feel inspired to take up that challenge either.

"For he affeird, it wes na winder,
His cursour suld him cast,
And hurt him,
Up at Dalkeith that day."

The adversaries and their supporters

"Syne pairtit at the Potter raw,
And sindry gaitis are gane
To rest thame,
Wt in the town þat nycht,"

showing that they were Edinburgh worthies, who had chosen Drum for their battlefield and Dalkeith for recuperation afterwards.

[The full text of the Ballad is given in Mr W. Tod Ritchie's edition of the Bannatyne MS. published this year (1928) by the Scottish Text Society, Vol. XXII. (New Series).]

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